

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6008

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: WHITE PAPER ON AUS REFORM

1. CAIRO PRESS AUGUST 9 REPORTS PRESIDENT SADAT'S WHITE PAPER ON REFORM OF ARAB SOCIALIST UNION (ASU) WAS DISTRIBUTED AUGUST 8 TO ASU CADRES FOR NATIONWIDE DISCUSSION. PAPER STRESSES VITAL NATURE OF SOCIALISM AND NATIONAL UNITY WHICH CAN BE MAINTAINED ONLY BY ACHIEVING UNANIMITY ON NATIONAL INTERESTS OF AGREEMENT ON AMICABLE SETTLEMENT OF CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN ASU, AND FREEDOM OF OPINION WITHIN ASU.

2. NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF PRESENT ASU ORGANIZATION ARE LISTED AS DIFFICULTY OF GATHERING SUCH A LARGE GROUP WITHIN ORGANIZATION'S FRAMEWORK, RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUS AND GOE, "SECRET VANGUARD ORGANIZATION", AND MIXING BETWEEN "METHOD" OF ONE PARTY SYSTEM AND "METHOD" OF ALLIANCE. (COMMENT: AUS IS OFFICIALLY REGARDED AS AN ALLIANCE, NOT A PARTY.)

3. PRESIDENT SADAT'S PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES REPORTEDLY DEALS WITH TWO ISSUES:

A. RECOMMENDATION THAT ASU MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE OPTIONAL AND SHOULD NOT BE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IMPOSED. (COMMENT: AT PRESENT JOURNALISTS, MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, MINISTERS, OFFICERS OF TRADE UNION AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND SENIOR

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OFFICIALS IN GOVERNMENT COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS MUST ALL

BE ASU MEMBERS.)

B. EMPHASIS ON NECESSITY FOR DOMESTIC DIALOGUE WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF BASIC PRINCIPLES OF 1952 REVOLUTION. EACH CITIZEN WHO ACCEPTS THESE PRINCIPLES HAS RIGHT TO MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT REGARD FOR "COMMON CLASSIFICATION RE LEFTIST AND RIGHTIST". PAPER, IN CLEAR ALLUSION TO CONTINUING PRESS CRITICISM OF GOE FROM LEFT AND RIGHT, CONTINUES: "WE STRONGLY REJECT ALLEGATIONS OF COUNTER REVOLUTION" FROM THOSE CLAIMING WE WANT TO RETURN TO PRE-1952 CONDITIONS. "LIKEWISE WE REJECT ADVENTUROUS LEFTIST ALLEGATIONS DENYING REVOLUTIONARY CRITERIA OF (POST 1952) ACHIEVEMENTS."

4. COMMENT: SADAT PROPOSES THAT MINORITY OPINION SHOULD BE HEARD WITHIN ASU BUT FAILS TO ENFORCE THE "DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE" BY SUGGESTING PENALTIES FOR THOSE WHO WOULD UNDERMINE IT. THIS SEEMS TO MEAN THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN NATURE OF PUBLIC POLITICAL DEBATE. AT PRESENT PARLIAMENT CONTAINS TWO OR THREE RECOGNIZABLE BLOCS, BUT ALL MP'S BELONG TO ASU. THERE IS NO SUGGESTION THAT THIS SITUATION IS TO EXCHANGED. THUS, SADAT'S STRESS ON NECESSITY FOR MORE DEMOCRACY MAY BE SOON THROWN TO THOSE FEW PROMINENT EGYPTIANS WHO HAVE BEEN CALLING OPENLY FOR REESTABLISHING POLITICAL PARTIES.
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